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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/531,679	03/20/2000	Osamu Kodama	M1866-24	6246

7590 03/21/2002

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EXAMINER

BRYANT, DAVID P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3726	

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. <b>09/531,679</b>	Applicant(s) <b>KODAMA et al.</b>
	Examiner <b>David Bryant</b>	Art Unit <b>3726</b>

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/11/02

2a)  This action is FINAL.      2b)  This action is non-final.

3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

4)  Claim(s) 3-7 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6)  Claim(s) 3-7 is/are rejected.

7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8)  Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

11)  The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a)  approved b)  disapproved.

12)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

13)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a)  All b)  Some\* c)  None of:

1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

**Attachment(s)**

15)  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)      18)  Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_

16)  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)      19)  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

17)  Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_      20)  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **DETAILED ACTION**

### *Continued Prosecution Application*

1. The request filed on March 11, 2002, for a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) under 37 CFR 1.53(d) based on parent Application No. 09/531,679 is acceptable and a CPA has been established. An action on the CPA follows.

### *Priority*

2. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority based on an application filed in Japan (11-074392) on March 18, 1999. It is noted, however, that applicant has not filed a certified copy of the Japanese application as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b).

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA) in view of Tsushima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,082).

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AAPA is found on page 2 of the specification, and teaches extending the life of cylindrical roller bearings or needle roller bearings, as exemplified in Unexamined Patent Publication (Kokai) No. 5-239550. Longer life is achieved by improving a retained austenite amount of a surface layer by about 30%, and subjecting the surface layer to a specific heat treatment for applying a residual compression stress. Thereafter, the part is subjected to specific surface machining so that the surface is formed with micro concavo-convex portions in random directions.

Thus, AAPA teaches the method essentially as claimed, but lacks a specific teaching of “carbonitriding” as claimed.

However, Tsushima et al. disclose that carburizing treatments for bearing components are insufficient for extending their service lives. To address these concerns, Tsushima et al. teach improved wear resistance and heat resistance may be obtained by carbonitriding the bearing structures.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to subject AAPA’s bearing structure to carbonitriding, as taught by Tsushima et al., to further extend the service life thereof.

### *Conclusion*

5. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the parent application prior to the filing of this Continued Prosecution Application under 37 CFR 1.53(d) and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action. Accordingly, THIS

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**ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing under 37

CFR 1.53(d). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37

CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner David Bryant whose telephone number is (703) 308-1859. The examiner can be reached Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.



**DAVID BRYANT  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
ART UNIT 3726**